
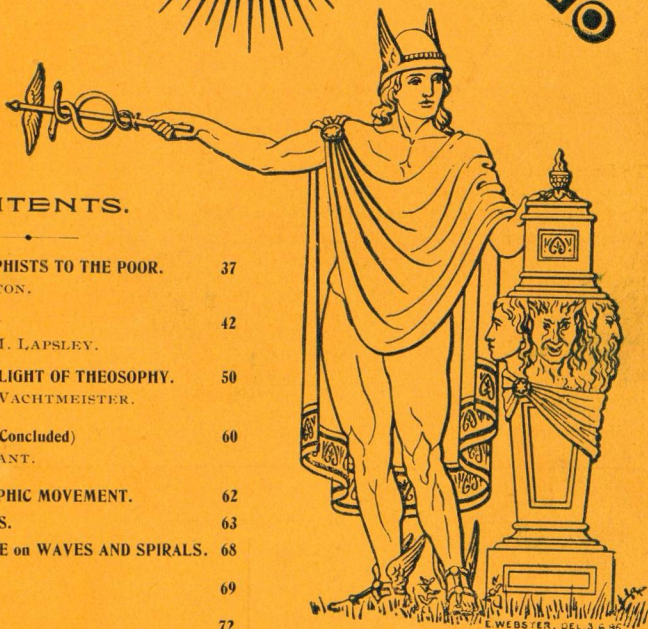


MERCURY.



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DEVOTED TO
THE STUDY OF THEOSOPHY, ORIENTAL PHILOSOPHY,
THE OCCULT SCIENCES AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.
 ISSUED MONTHLY.

WILLIAM JOHN WALTERS, - - - - **Managing Editor.**

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W. J. WALTERS,
PALACE HOTEL, SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.



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Objects of the Theosophical Society.

To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.

To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.

To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

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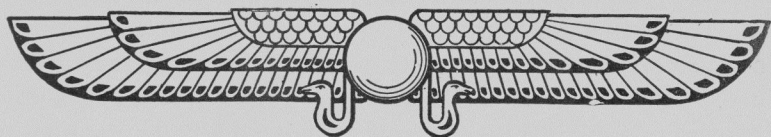
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THE DUTY OF THEOSOPHISTS TO THE POOR.

THERE has several times of late been raised in our Branch the very interesting and important question of the duty of Theosophists to the poor, but it has not received any large or adequate discussion. Very naturally it divides itself into two heads—that of instruction and that of relief—the second being the more immediately practical.

I do not myself believe that it is possible to formulate any fixed rule as being either demonstrable or authoritative. Theosophy is not a code or a creed, and it never insists that the dicta of other people shall be a guide to oneself, the uniform teaching being that nothing can really be truth to a man which he is not himself convinced of; any other or opposing doctrines, however sustained by great names, being merely undigested masses, giving out no strength or life, and only acting as centers of disturbance or inflammation. Hence we cannot certainly say that Theosophy affirms this or that theory, or exacts this or that course, for we have no real power to commit the Wisdom-Religion to the support of our own inferences.

Nevertheless, it is possible to arrive at certain principles, to establish reasonably certain data, from which one may deduce probabilities as to a right path. It is as if there were several forces acting with different degrees of strength and in different directions. We cannot gauge precisely the strength of each, nor can we find the precise direction each assumes; yet we may ap-

proximately estimate both, and so draw a line giving *about* the resultant therefrom. And this is the more practicable when we remember that Theosophy rejects no fact, by whomsoever ascertained. It embraces all truths, truths as well of political economy as of cosmic order, truths of social science no less than truths in spiritual evolution. You know how very distinct is *Light on the Path* in its assertion that there is to be "study of the laws of being, the laws of nature, the laws of the supernatural," and that "all steps are necessary to make up the ladder." Hence Theosophy greets every sincere investigator in every field, and gladly adds to its treasury whatever of fact his exertions may have secured. Each new truth disclosed enriches its resources, even though an enemy has unearthed it and it is not labeled "Property of the T. S."

Within a very recent time only has the subject of pauperism been systematically studied. Taken in mass, and in relation to its causes, it is a highly complicated matter, involving questions of the tenure of property, and of the function of capital, and of the result of tariffs, with which we here have nothing to do. But taken in detail, treated in relation to the best method of relief and to the consequences of any other method of relief, a large mass of facts has been gathered and tabulated, and some few laws have been ascertained as of invariable action. This has been accomplished mainly through two agencies—one the school of philosophic inquirers, seeking the facts as a basis for intelligent legislation; the other, the band of organized charities, its mission being facts as a guide to innocuous relief. The two together have been of enormous service to society, and have set up finger-posts of inestimable value in pointing out the true course to those whose beneficent impulses prompt them to give, but who have not the knowledge how to give so as to ensure real relief and yet avoid the evil which mere giving entails.

I think I am correct in saying that all these authorities, without exception, unite in proclaiming the following as facts:

1st. That beggars in the street are almost invariably unworthy, and that donations to them are an injury to them and to the community. The famous Archbishop Whately thanked God that never in his life had he given to a street beggar. This sounds a little extreme, though it is perhaps natural that the mind of a great logician should apply logic to each incident in life. Even

in his day it was perceived that public appeals for aid upon the highway implied a decadence of energy and of self-respect which must have been largely the cause of penury, and which would inevitably be increased by the reception of alms. To give, in such a case, was simply to intensify the original motive to beg, and to add the new one of finding beggary successful. Very careful inquiries have been made by the agents of the Societies I have referred to, and their uniform report is that the cases of real merit are so exceedingly few, and the impossibility of distinguishing them so entire, that the only safe course is an unvarying refusal to such petitioners. For of course it must be remembered that the appearance of abject misery is essential to a successful appeal, that this must, therefore, be simulated if not real, and that the casual passer-by cannot detect the simulation. How are you to verify the borrowed baby, the assumed rags, the manufactured wounds, the piteous tale? Only they can do it who are familiar with the whole matter; and their testimony is unanimous that none of these things can be relied upon.

Undoubtedly it is possible that an industrious man, driven to desperation by the hunger of himself and family, may publicly beg rather than secretly starve, and the Societies' agents do not deny this, but only assert that the chances in any given case are vastly against genuineness, and that the right method of relief is not by street-alms, but by a reference to and inquiry by themselves.

A second fact, also established by abundant experience, is that the most beneficial, as well as the least injurious, charity is that which furnishes work rather than unearned alms. To receive money not won through exertion does usually seem, whatever be the rationale of it, to lower self-respect and abate the spirit of industry. Hence the effort of all modern philanthropists is to insist, whenever practicable, on some service as the condition of help, and to make the recipient feel that the money is his because he has the right to it, not because some one else has chosen to give it to him. This, of course, has no application to the sick, the aged, the infirm, or to children, but otherwise it is the guiding principle in all beneficence which is to permanently uplift rather than permanently abase. For most surely that charity is short-sighted which lessens for the moment a pain by means which will afterwards make the pain sharper and longer; and he cannot be

called cold or heartless who seeks a remedy which shall cure rather than a palliative which shall soothe.

A third fact, equally well established, is that, in all cases not personally known to the donor, aid is best given through enquiry and action by the experienced agents of organized charity. This is simply saying that a thing can be better done by one who knows how to do it than by one who does not. These agents have for years been familiar with all the forms and varieties and aspects of poverty; they are at home with the disguises and pretences and subterfuges of imposition; their trained eyes and ears are quick to distinguish reality from sham, and to give to slight indications, imperceptible to a casual glance, the full meaning with which they are pregnant; and, accustomed to poverty and therefore unshocked by its more squalid manifestations, their heads are cool for a diagnosis of each case and the means wherewith it can best be treated. If you or I were to visit these hovels with a view to relief, two things would inevitably result: 1st—we should be so horror-stricken at the spectacle that we would rashly and impetuously pour out our whole store for immediate use, and, 2d—we should be the victims of experienced craft, the clamorous or the ingenious securing the alms we designed for the worthy. We should probably come away appalled, revolted, hopeless, and thereafter indifferent.

For every reason it is considered best that treatment of the poor should be undertaken by those who know how to treat the poor, just as treatment of the sick is by those who understand it. Hence private citizens are advised to refer unknown cases to the Societies for investigation, cards and other facilities being furnished for just this use. They ask us to give them money for the relief of suffering, and to give it because they can apply it intelligently, economically and wisely, whereas our untrained hands would scatter it foolishly, rashly and injuriously. But this has no reference to the cases we know personally, to the worthy but distressed people of whom every family, every individual, has cognizance. The toiling washerwoman, the underpaid sewing woman, the artisan with a sick child, the disabled clerk—who does not know one or more of these whom his benefactions may bless?

Now what is the contention of this paper as to the duty of

Theosophists? Simply this—that while Theosophists have a stronger motive to universal benevolence than have other men, they have no better knowledge of the way in which that benevolence should be exercised, and are bound to avail themselves of the light which other workers, not Theosophists, have thrown on the problems of pauperism. If it is a demonstrated fact that street-beggars are, with hardly an exception, unworthy, and that every gift increases and perpetuates the evil, that consequence will not be prevented by your pleading deep sympathy and saying solemnly “Universal Brotherhood.” Facts are not to be downed by phrases. It is quite true that it is hard to be consistent. I myself one day last week, when emerging from a restaurant, after a modest lunch, found at its door a young man who asked for aid to get food. He was thin and gaunt and dirty, and his look was hungry. I knew very well that he was probably unworthy, and that his position at the restaurant door had been sagaciously chosen as the most likely one to evoke sympathy, yet the thought of a fellow-creature’s being refused food when I had just been fed was horrible to me, and I gave him a trifle. Some of you will say that I did right. But are you sure of that? I knew then as well as when I wrote this paper what is the rule in such cases, and what was my duty, but I ignored the rule and violated the duty because of a sympathetic impulse. Was this either rational or Theosophic? Are Theosophists to be calm and consistent only when no temptation leads them to be otherwise; and is knowledge so lightly based that it is at any moment to be upset by sentiment? Still, I am not bringing any railing accusation when I say that you have probably all sinned with me in the same way, from the President down.

Further: If it is a demonstrated fact that the most far-reaching aid is that which furnishes remunerated work rather than unearned bounty, do not Theosophists best promote the universal good by conforming to it? The exaction of a small service is not for selfish ends, but to ensure benefit to the server and prevent injury to the community.

Still further: If it is a demonstrated fact that true relief to poverty is an art, acquired only through training under organized agencies, are not Theosophists wise in recognizing it and in acceding to those recommendations which are the fruit of long ex-

periences and of careful thought? We have no special incentives to waste beneficence or to foment pauperism, and we may as well use the channels which do neither.

The only plausible objection to the position here taken is its chilling effect upon sympathy. One may be told that the heart does not reason, that beneficent impulse cools if made to wait for the approval of intelligence, that charity is not an affair of calculation. But why not? Force is not valuable merely as force; if ill-directed or not directed, it is as likely to be mischievous as useful. Zeal is one kind of force, but it is only the zeal according to knowledge which effects true ends. Charitable impulse is one form of zeal, but if ignorantly expended it defeats its own aim and engenders evils which may be permanent and enlarging. The all-round man is he whose character is symmetrically developed, whose mental, moral and emotional functions are equably in action, and through all whose acts runs the influence of an intelligent will, disciplined by thought, experience and observation. Such is the ideal of Theosophy. It does not smile on the icy cynic, nor yet on the hare-brained enthusiast; but exhorts to the generous, united use of both heart and head. Neither alone will treat pauperism, any more than other problems, as it should be treated; in unison, they may find the solution. What Theosophy has to say respecting the instruction of the poor, and that wider question of the instruction of the community at large, we may perhaps inquire on another occasion.

ALEXANDER FULLERTON.

THOUGHT.

It comes as a great surprise to hear for the first time that *thoughts* are *things*; and through the force of habit we laugh at the one who tells of the fact, wondering if he is sane. Still, facts cannot be killed, and like a cube of granite, they always tumble with the right side up. In the history of the world, Truth has always been stranger than Fiction; and the greatest pain suffered by students of Truth is the knowledge that the world, still blind to the Great Beyond, is content with fiction, not truth; that people seek phenomena, not reality; and that effect, not cause satisfies the public mind.

Nevertheless, here and there, in the progress of humanity, are to be found those, whose peculiarly-formed organism qualifies them to peep behind the veil and give us the knowledge of the cause of that which we know as effect. From evidence gained by powers, latent in the majority, though active in a few, we have learned that thoughts are things as real and substantial in their own world, as material objects are in the physical world. By the power of thought the world has arrived at its present state of civilization. What could we know of Astronomy, Geology, Botany, but for thought? Where would electricity, steam and the telephone be, but for thought? Yet people can still afford to laugh when some one says thought is something real and tangible.

The world was startled some time ago by the discovery of the X-ray and the strange revelations made through its influence. But I make bold to say, that the world would be more than startled if they knew that the most secret thought of the most obscure mind is carefully stored in the mental world, helping or hindering the path of Evolution. We are too much engrossed with our selfish interests to care much for what goes on behind the veil. Nevertheless, we are continually filling the sphere that surrounds us with thoughts, which, without any other aid, are constantly moulding and making our destiny. "As a man thinketh, so is he." Watch the man whose attention is wholly directed to money-making. All his thoughts are plans to procure the dollars; he fills his mental world with forms that have but that one end in view. When he has gained a fortune, he wants to turn his attention in some new channel, but he cannot, for his mental world is continually filled with thoughts bearing on finance alone. The same is true of any character, its predominant mental trait becomes the conspicuous feature of its life, and where you find lives with little mental exertion, there you meet with those who create little of any good, and feed much that is vile. For the positive mind creates and sends forth, while the negative mind attracts and absorbs outside thoughts. Thus many, too indolent to think for themselves, merely use the thoughts created by others, and not the best and purest at that. Hence, do not lie lazily bathing in the very questionable thoughts emanating from idle people, but arise and create what is good and noble to think.

In the West we are very ignorant of Psychology, consequently abstract portions of man's nature remain unknown. Yet we are

living in the land of Bibles, and in them we read "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God." This is the declaration of the possibilities of man. But it is flatly contradicted by the clergy, who declare the Occult to be a mystery beyond the comprehension of man. This assertion has been believed until very lately, and thereby man has been kept in ignorance of himself, and continued ignorance has led to misunderstanding. The greatest power man has, namely thought, has been kept in the background. But thanks to a few pioneers of Truth, it has been brought to light again.

Thought and imagination are sometimes regarded as synonymous terms or words designating the same thing. But I make a difference. A voluntary act of thinking and the power of imagining are the same, because to think is to create; it is due to our own volition. It is our own act. Imagination is also our own act, for it is we who image, who make what we imagine. But thought is something more. For instance, we may be reading something, or talking on a subject, and we pause; something has occurred. A thought—which does not belong to us—which we did not create, an idea we did not imagine or did not know about, dawns on our consciousness. From whence came it? Who was its parent? Why did it come to us? It comes simply by the law of affinity. Our previous attitude of mind was such that we were unconsciously able to be affected by the vibrations of the mental world, and to sense the thoughts there existing akin to our own. But those thoughts, which the mind of a thinker is trained to seek and assimilate, were created by some other thinker, whose mental state was the same, whose aspiration and life were the same. The power that gave this thought its birth in the original brain and sent it on its cycle of existence, and the amount of force, of strength, of love, generated to bring it into existence, indicate the period of time it will survive in that condition. But before it has expended the energy within, it is attracted to others whose minds generate similar thoughts, and when it arrives in the aura of these others, they at once become conscious of its existence; hence we hear one exclaim: "I am impressed with, 'struck' by a thought!" As long as the mind is engaged in thinking about it, this thought is absorbing from us an amount of aura; it is feeding upon us, but, at the same time, it is being photographed, so to speak, on our aura, and the longer it exists in our consciousness, the more definite is the picture.

This thought-form re-fed by sojourning with us, if we entertain it, then leaves us to go on its own cycle of life; but its picture remains in our aura, and some time after we think that thought again, forming it after the pattern in our consciousness and sending it forth anew in the mental world, for weal or woe. All those who live in its cycle or current, who have an affinity for such thoughts, will be influenced by it. Ultimately it returns to him who gave it birth, to be re-fed and clothed, or resisted and transmuted.

So in thought lies the power to redeem ourselves, just as in thought lies the real evidence of our guilt and sin. We are constantly sowing thought; we are constantly forming character by its power. Thus we make our own destiny. This shows us the true value of thought. Any one who thinks wrongly about another, or wishes him ill, is creating a force, a real life, that will go forth on its mission of evil, tormenting all those whom it may meet, who have something in them akin to it. But after a time it returns to its creator, enriched by what it has gained in its travels. Thus the evil-doer is brought face to face with himself. Herein is the terrible reality. All our thoughts are near us, like a huge standing army. We feed them when we think about them, and they in turn provoke us to think about them. When we alter the trend of our thought, they rise up against us, because they instinctively feel we are taking away the life element that gives them being. Then begins the terrible struggle with the foes in our own household. The old creations of the mind, like hungry children, beset the parents who gave them birth. To stand up and parley, or even fight with them, is of no use. They must be killed out, but not by warfare. The life power in them must be transmuted. When a thought-form forces itself on the consciousness, the current of its life must be redirected so that the evil form will be changed to one of use and beauty. The only way to do this wisely is to pay no attention to the old forms, never think about them, for thinking feeds them; but when they seek to impress the mind with their presence, they should be changed by throwing into them ideas of love and selflessness, then the life of the old form will be taken from it to feed the new, producing a kind of reincarnation through which thought is transmuted. One very good way of doing this is to keep in mind a

high and noble thought, as for example: "Oh, were we pure, even were our bodies made like crystal, so that all men could see through us and behold our every action, purpose, wish and thought! They would but love us the better for all they saw. Yes, set us as pearls in God's own Kingdom, holding our lives as worth above all fame and power, the spiritual body is like this, and such are all Heaven's pure inhabitants. In this degree of purity, the sons of God dwell. In this degree of purity can God only be known, and until we are as pure, we will not behold the face of our Father who is in Heaven, for the pure alone can see God."

When an evil or objectionable thought comes into the consciousness, pay no attention to it, but instantly repeat the above, or some lofty conception to which the higher man may vibrate. Thus the strength and attitude of the mind convert the life of the evil thought into the higher ideal, and in so doing we fulfill the Scriptural injunction: "Resist not evil, but overcome evil with good."

It is quite possible to exert the will sufficiently to actually suppress evil thoughts; but this is not proper, for the will that suppresses, binds the evil thought and makes it a slave and prisoner, which will spring to life again immediately as the tension is relaxed, and will be only the more bitter for its temporary bondage, playing then sad havoc among those susceptible to its influence.

We are in the body to build the Temple of Divine Manhood. Our thoughts are the molecules that build it up, and as our thoughts are now, so will be our bodies in the future. Every thought we have, good or bad, is classified under its proper heading, and finds its place in the human composition. We should use our thinking faculty to create the highest ideal of life that mind is capable of conceiving, and to direct our whole attention towards accomplishing that end. By so doing we are creating an ideal that will be sensed by others, and by keeping our thoughts on it we will constantly feed it so that it will go and help others to lift their cross and realize the true life. When these thoughts come back to us, made stronger by having associated with kindred thoughts and minds, then we will feel strengthened for nobler work in the regeneration of our natures. Thus the action

of thought, its interaction with other thoughts from similar minds, and the result on humanity, knit mankind into a common brotherhood, not only as a metaphysical idea but as a veritable fact. Within the organism of man there are faculties and powers through which he can comprehend Nature in her most minute details: We have physiological organs through which the brain can become conscious of the higher planes, conscious of what the higher man knows. Intuition is the power of being interiorly taught. But before intuition can awaken there must be a center aroused in the physical frame through which the consciousness can sense the Truth taught.

A very slight investigation soon reveals the fact that thought has an evil or good effect even on the physical frame. Certain thoughts cause the red blood to mount the cheeks and set the frame on fire, other thoughts cause a stoppage of the heart, make the face pale as death. Thought again causes some of the organs of the body to move, and conversely certain motions of the body induce certain thoughts. Watch a public speaker, when he warms up into his subject, his hands describe various motions, almost involuntary. Then his audience may twitch under his sarcasm, or be forced to applaud some grand idea. This subjection of the body to thought brings us to register the similar fact that a function of the body may be used by some elemental or elementary, when we see the motion but do not suspect the cause; if this is permitted a species of spirit control takes place, and unless we promptly object to our bodies being moved without our own will, we lose control of that organ and become a slave to the outside that controls it. Now why is all this? It is to be traced to some centers of the physical man that stand like an open door, and all things can enter whether they defile or not. But when anything enters that moves the body, the brain becomes conscious of the corresponding kind of thought. It is thus that some people feel elated one time, depressed another, or feel that they must be nasty and almost rude, while within themselves they do not want to be. This is the effect physically of thought on the body.

Now, then, we come to the point of how to seek knowledge through outside thought. Suppose there is some subject of which you know very little, and one point worthy of being known appears on which you know nothing. Formulate the question

clearly in your mind, get every detail mentally before you so that you can sense your question to be intelligent and clear. Then ask—not an abstruse power or imaginary being—but that Power that gives Being to your Soul to reveal the desired meaning. It may not come instantly because this method has not been practiced for ages and disuse causes atrophy. But persistently seek and you will find the answer made clear to your consciousness and it will permeate not only your brain but even the important centers of the body, though the sensation will hardly be physical, and then it will be possible to clothe the idea in human language.

Such a result proves that the mind can become conscious of the existence of an Intelligence within that only speaks in silence, only talks when one is attentive, an Intelligence that utters its voice only in the interest of the higher man, the better life. It cannot be bribed, but it can be wooed. It cannot be commanded, but it can be obeyed. You may slight it and it will leave you—it will not return evil. It will not force itself upon you. Yet it will come gladly and be friend, helper, teacher, to all who want it. This Intelligence is the Higher Manas, the forerunner of Buddhi. It is John the Baptist preparing the way of the Christ. There are many, however, whose organisms cannot sense the finer vibrations of Higher Manas and they must have recourse to the cultivation of noble thought. They must saturate themselves with a lofty ideal, get it fixed clearly in mental vision and make all things subservient to this end. Now this ideal, composed of the substance of thought, reacts on the physical body every time the mind thinks about it. If this ideal is good, just and loving, it will insensibly transmute the baser passions into pure life and make of the animal man a Lord of the Universe, because each time the animal man thinks of this ideal, goodness, justice, love, purity, etc., are flashed from the brain to every part of the body, and the more often one thinks this ideal and meditates upon it, the more is it sent along the nerves till the entire frame becomes saturated with it. Then chemicalization takes place. The old animal man decays and dies, while the new man is born from the old. The new man is more sensitive and ethereal and can sense the vibrations of the Higher Manas from whence comes pure thought that will lead us heavenward.

Some years ago Henry Drummond delivered a lecture on "The

Greatest Thing in the World." That thing he asserted was Love. Now, on the same principle, I believe the greatest evil in the world is the want of Love. By the term "Love" I do not mean the refined sensualism that passes under that name, I do not mean the animal infatuation that attracts one to another; but I mean that lofty state of mind, that pure condition of life, when one will not or cannot think evil of any one, when all men and women are regarded as parts of our very selves, when we would no more dream of wishing evil to our worst enemy than we would to our own selves. I do not say that it is easy to lead such a life, but I do say that a beginning can be made to live thus. The evil and malignant influences of those who wish us ill can easily be overcome by wishing them well. It is said of the Nazarene that the Prince of this world could find nothing in him. The same could be said of us, did we live as he did. Every day in our midst you hear men tell you how they would run the Government; yet they cannot run their own concerns properly. Their philosophy is no use where their own actions are concerned. It simply brings us back to the old statement: "You cannot know the doctrine unless you do the will." Those, then, who want to know the Truth must themselves be true. Let them begin with the thinking principle, for it is the source of good and evil to us. Generate the best thoughts. Think the highest ideal, and strive to attain it. Do not think that one solitary soul struggling to be good has no influence in the evil world. Suppose you take a bottle of water and throw one drop of laudanum into it; shake the bottle and you will see no signs of the laudanum. But put the liquid under chemical analysis and you will find that all the water is equally permeated by that one drop. Just so, then, in the mental world, your good thoughts, your high ideals, may apparently be swallowed up in the mass of impurity and obscenity, but, nevertheless, they are there, like yeast leavening the whole. It is our privilege then to help the coming generation by filling the mental world with those thoughts that will stir up what is best in human nature. Let us disseminate ideas that will lead to the appreciation of the good and the beautiful, of music, art, science; quicken and maintain confidence between man and man; trust mankind and you yourself will be trusted. If you think you at present have full control of your mental faculties, just try

to keep your mind fixed for ten minutes on one definite subject or object. Do not allow any other idea or object to come into the mind. Then you will know how hard it is to be concentrated—that is to say to command the mind. We are not intended to live to make money, or to eat and drink only; we are not given our life to be slaves to our appetites or passions; we should, therefore, live to be subservient to nothing but goodness, for “we live in deeds not years, in thoughts not breaths, in aspiration not in figures on a dial. He most lives who thinks most, feels the noblest and acts the best.”

JAMES N. M. LAPSLEY.

SPIRITUALISM IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY.

[*Concluded.*]

Having pursued my investigations to the end of these two years, I came to the conclusion that mediumship for me was not desirable for the following reason:

I did not care to make myself passive, thus permitting entities of the other side to take possession of my body. I was never unconscious, so that during the whole time that I passed through these various stages of mediumship, I was as conscious as I am at the present moment.

But I reasoned thus: All the experiences given by these mediums (and I must have visited over fifty) are different, each experience seems to conflict with others of its kind, I can nowhere discover a law which binds the whole together, therefore it is impossible that this can be the whole of the truth; it is only a fragment—a very imperfect one—of a vast philosophy. There must be something beyond it. I knew well that what I received was genuine, but at the same time there was no coherence or co-ordinate system in Spiritualism; there was not a philosophy that could be placed before the world with such a coherence of thought, that it would be accepted really by intelligent people.

What Spiritualism has most gloriously achieved is the showing to mankind that there is a state after death, a life beyond the physical and material plane, that intelligences are able to work the finer forces of nature and also that astral bodies are able to communicate with the living. You are able to draw your dead back again into consciousness on this plane; but is that wise, or is that right? You who do not think it desirable to go down into

the slums or into the prisons to help to elevate the moral tone of the degraded people you can find in those conditions, will yet willingly accept visits from those same degraded entities, if they only come from the other side! There is a sort of unwholesome fascination about it. As one lady said to me—a lady of title in London who held her private seances: “Oh, such fun to-day! Why, we had that man (who has hanged last week), who had committed those horrible crimes; he came and we had such fun making him confess the details of his guilt.” This revolted me! Such were not the grand thoughts which should inspire Spiritualists. I felt that such wonderful influx of power had been thrown down into Spiritualism that it should rise into something grander and wider, into something more noble; that all that kind of amusement should be discarded; that all those promiscuous seances, where you bring in every kind of person, every kind of magnetism, every sort of vibration and condition, should be put on one side; that laws should pervade the whole; that all Spiritualists should adhere to those laws, so that every kind of seance should be given under law; then there would be a possibility of having some kind of order and coherence. But traveling about from one country to another, as I did, I found that curiosity and amusement seemed to be the prevailing object and only basis for the study and manifestation of Spiritualism.

From Spiritualism I turned to Occultism, and there I found that there was a method of developing the faculties which would enable any person to reach to the planes where the departed dwell. As I advanced in my studies, I found them so intensely interesting that I determined to give up Spiritualism, simply for the reason that I could get nothing more out of it. I had had test seances for the very highest spiritual knowledge, but these seances proved to be a kind of repetition of what was in the minds of the sitters. Though I tried in every possible way to get a coherent philosophy, I failed entirely to do so.

To banish my mediumship, I had to develop my will-power. Therefore I began, willing at every animate and inanimate object, until I had developed my will-power to that extent that I was able to close the door of mediumship, and from that time have never had a single phase of mediumship, because having once fastened that door I have kept it tightly closed.

I then began trying what effect this will power would have at seances. I visited one where little tables were scattered in the room, with people seated around them. It was a public room in Paris. An old man was talking to his son who had been dead for three years, and since that death the old man had received weekly communications from his boy. I went up to that table, directed my will power between him and his son and the table stopped; the old man was bewildered, he could not understand why his son should be silent, and at last the tears rolled slowly down his cheeks. I moved away. The table was still. The thought then came to me: "What right have I to stand between that man and his son? What right have I to impose my will upon another human being?" Then I removed my will-power, and in a few moments the table was running along merrily, and the old man was happy once more.

When alone, I pondered over this great problem and came to the conclusion that I was acting wrongly; that no human being has the right to exercise will-power over another human being. I looked upon it as a crime, and from that day dropped the physical will-power.

Later on, I came into Theosophy. A perusal of *Isis Unveiled* showed me that in that volume were many of the ideas which I had formulated during my investigation of Spiritualism. I joined the Theosophical Society in the hope of gaining knowledge, the same motive which had prompted me when I joined the Spiritualists. Then I began the same process of investigation in Theosophy, and soon I discovered that there was another kind of will-power, a spiritual will-power; that was the right kind of power to possess. And how is it to be obtained? Through self-abnegation, through denying yourself in all ways, through unselfishness and, lastly, through the killing out of desires, for every desire is a bond which binds you to earth. Imagine each desire as a hook, each hook fastened on to the things you long for, each hook attached to some worldly object. On every hook is a chain which winds around you binding you down to earth. With every desire that you can overcome that hook unfastens, the chain loosens, drops from you and then does the spiritual force surge up. Therefore, every desire that you can overcome for earthly things, every hook that you can unfasten, liberates the spiritual power within you.

Later on, the origin and the purpose of the great Spiritualistic movement was explained to me. I learned why Spiritualism had come into the world.

A group of Atlantean Adepts, who had brought with them the traditions of that older period of time and the knowledge of Occultism, as practiced in those early days, seeing how the world was rushing down into materialism with rapid strides, noticing how, as persons were developing their intellectual powers, the churches gradually lost their hold upon them, and so having nothing to cling to they were drifting down into materialism, the Lodge determined to stop this terrible downward course; and a spiritual influx was thrown down here into America, and then began the Rochester manifestations, these Adepts being living men, great souls from Atlantis incarnated into the bodies of North American Indians. It was they who brought forward this grand movement of Spiritualism.

But unfortunately Spiritualism has nowhere followed altogether the course it was intended to develop, because their object was that Spiritualism through its phenomena should show to the world that there is a life after death; that there are forces in existence finer and more subtle than the material forces; that there are other planes besides this physical plane. Thus far it has succeeded; but it was the intention also of these Adepts to pour out through Spiritualism the vast philosophy of the Wisdom Religion, and in this the failure comes. Why? Because the people were so delighted with the phenomena, so taken with the novelty of the manifestations, that they all rushed into phenomena at once; they wanted nothing more. They were able to communicate with their dearly beloved—what then did they care for philosophy?

And so these Adepts, finding the impossibility of turning the minds of people into more serious channels, quietly receded from the movement; but there is still the chance of making the conditions favorable so that these Adepts who were at the head of your Spiritualistic Society would return to you. They are glorious beings, advanced Adepts, but living in the human body. Why then should you not develop your mediumistic powers according to law, so that you might become instruments for these Adepts for work in your own country? Every medium has some of the inner faculties awakened, but every medium, more or less, is an

irresponsible being, because not understanding the laws he does not know how to produce phenomena at will. No medium can enter on to the other planes with perfect knowledge of all the conditions of those planes—a little glimpse does not reveal all of that inner world's conditions. No medium has the power of entering on to the other planes with full intelligence, helping those that have gone beyond on the actual planes in which they find themselves; this requires the perfect knowledge.

Later on, in 1875, a messenger appeared from the great White Lodge in the Himalayas; H. P. Blavatsky, the disciple of the Masters, was sent by those great teachers to stem the tide that was rushing towards materialism; she turned, as you will remember, first to the Spiritualists, hoping to get a certain number around her to listen to the grand philosophy which it was her duty to spread all over the world, but disappointment was the result, phenomena proved too attractive. The Theosophical Society was formed in New York in 1875, and H. P. Blavatsky gathered around from all sides those who were willing to listen to the grand truths which she had to expound. H. P. B. said to all those pupils who came to learn of her the inner truths of Occultism: "Never accept anything because I tell you it is true, but take what I tell you as a hypothesis on which to work; follow on the lines I will give to you, and then gradually you will be able to find for yourselves that what I tell you is true." Those pupils have gone on year after year, following the directions thus given to them, and, just as water dropping on to a stone will by degrees wear that stone away, so have these pupils been able by unwearied attention to develop all these wonderful psychical faculties with knowledge, so that now to-day, at any moment, they can enter on to the astral or heavenly planes—they can meet their comrades, can converse with them, as also with the souls of those who have passed through death and, returning to the earth, can translate that knowledge on to the physical brain. These persons can bring their different experiences together, and finding that they corroborate one another, they thus place before the public testimony that is worthy of consideration.

Now the difference between Spiritualism and Theosophy is, that in your Spiritualism you try to draw your loved ones down on to the physical plane of our existence, whereas, we in Theosophy endeavor to draw ourselves upwards on to both the astral

and spiritual planes. You think that you benefit your friends by bringing them back to earthly conditions; we maintain that as the law of Evolution is continual progression, it is harmful to retard the progress of those who have left this earth by inducing them to return, because every manifestation here causes them to imbibe a certain amount of magnetic vitality which prevents their astral bodies from disintegrating as quickly as they otherwise would; and so Spiritualism retards instead of helping the loved ones.

Now, what is the work of these disciples of the Great Masters of Theosophy, who are thus able to enter on to these various planes at will? Their work and their privilege is to receive the souls of the dead. There is not one single soul that passes from this life that is not welcomed on the other side by living men and women. These souls look upon them as angels because they see them in their astral or spiritual bodies, but they are the living men and women of to-day; and they show those souls how to progress; they show them their true conditions; they comfort them and help them to reach on to higher planes. In *Lucifer*, the English Journal of our Society, you will find an interesting article on this subject, called "Invisible Helpers," by Mr. Leadbeater; also in his books, *The Astral Planes* and *Devachan*, he gives you a detailed description of these higher planes. Would it not be desirable for you to develop your psychic gifts in this way? If you could only develop your psychic faculties so that you had the command of them, then you would know that what you gave out to the world was correct and true. And then again, would it not be a wonderful privilege to help your loved ones on the other side?

On the physical plane, as I have already told you, go into your prisons, go into your slums, and help people while in their physical bodies; but if you want to help your friends in their astral bodies, then meet them on their own plane and render them there the services and help which you cannot give them here.

Theosophy teaches much that is interesting in regard to the four bodies in man, namely, the physical, the astral, the mental and the spiritual bodies. Now the physical body should be held as a holy temple for the one who wants to develop psychically. The body should be kept cleanly in every way, bathing should be a daily practice, so as to keep the pores of the skin perfectly pure and fresh. Then again, the matter of food is of great importance,

because, as you build up your physical body with various atoms, so does it become either gross or ethereal. If you eat the grosser foods, such as flesh meats, then you build up your body with the grosser particles, and thus make it less susceptible to the higher influences. The great importance of this is, that the astral body is built up and fed on the astral emanations of the food you take. Therefore, if animal flesh is consumed, the astral body is fed with the psychic emanations of the animals. All animals have passions, such as jealousy, anger, etc., and you draw into your own astral body those particular elements, it being the body of desire. The astral body contains all our emotions both for good and for evil. Therefore we should try not to augment the evil by assimilating into it the passions of the animal kingdom; instead, we should turn to the finer foods of nature so that purer emanations should help in the building of this ethereal body. Fruits are the best, and everything on which the sun shines, because the sun has a wonderfully vitalizing effect, so that those who are eager for the purest and best development should eat only fruit and nuts

But this is only the first and primitive stage. The mental and moral have also to be developed; and how is the mental body to be built? The only process is through the thinking faculty. You build up this body exactly in accordance with your thoughts; so that if your thoughts are very trifling and only occupied with the every-day gossip of the world or trivial occupations, you build up a very imperfect mental body. Daily should you meditate and concentrate; daily should you set your mind on some noble ideal or virtue; and then, by slow degrees, will you be able to turn the current of your thoughts from trivialities and nonsense to higher themes and nobler conceptions of virtue. You may read a hundred books in a year and yet know nothing of what is contained in those books—it is only what you really assimilate which becomes your own. So it is far better to read only one good book and to have imbibed the essence of all that is noble and elevating within it, than to skim over many books leaving the jewels within them untouched.

Then the spiritual body, how does that grow? By every thought of devotion, every thought of worship, so that every aspiration towards the divine is augmenting the joy and blessing which will be experienced in the heavenly state; for the more a

man longs for the spiritual while on earth, the more happiness awaits him on the other side.

Theosophy has much to teach because it lays down plain rules to be followed in every-day life; it also explains how you should develop your faculties with understanding, and then it places before you the possibility of developing your inner psychic powers so that you may gain control over them.

I have spoken to you to-day with my heartfelt wishes that some of these words of mine may find a responsive chord within your hearts, so that you will realize the truth of what I am telling you.

When I learned that the Adepts who started the Spiritualistic movement were living men, a kind of revelation and explanation of certain experiences of my own came to me, proving to me that some phases of the movement were really guided by Adepts living in the physical body. In Europe I heard that there was a group of Spiritualists who obtained wonderful manifestations. They were seven in number, and these people had given up their lives entirely to Spiritualism; they no longer cared for the pleasures of the world—they cared only for the work in which they were engaged. I went to the house with a certain hesitation, not knowing how I, a total stranger, should be received when I asked them to admit me into their circle. What was my astonishment then when they welcomed me cordially, saying, "We have been expecting you!" On inquiring how this could be, they replied, "We are a band of people who belong to circles of seven all over the world. The Head of our Society is a living man in America. We do not know him personally, but friends have met him in his physical body, and he has control over all these circles situated in different countries. He is aware of all that takes place in each circle, and directs the work to be done; each circle sits at the same hour, with thoughts and minds centered on the particular work in hand." They then informed me that in their own circle a member was able to leave his own body at will, and in his astral would visit another circle, take possession of the medium, and then would give teachings to that circle, so that the medium instead of being controlled by a departed entity, was being used by a living man. This circle fell into disgrace, having abused power confided to them, and a telegram at once received from America ordered all meetings to be closed, and manifestations to

cease. They were terribly despondent; having given up the pleasures of the world, their life seemed just a blank, and the trial was a severe one. They determined to sit all the same, thinking that perhaps the Head in America would not know; but it was useless—they could not obtain a single rap. One day another telegram arrived, saying, "A lady will call on you, give her everything, communications opened."

You may imagine the joy with which they received me. I came; I sat with them, and the manifestations were simply marvelous. I remained with them for a week. They wanted me to join their band, but I said "No; my object is to study Spiritualism, and I can join nothing until I have finished that work."

They then offered to communicate with me at a distance, and I agreed, thinking it would be interesting. They then said, "Would you like Jonathan to visit you; he is the one whom the Head in America always uses when he wants to perform any great physical manifestation." In my innocence I replied, "Yes."

I left them; I went to Switzerland, and, suddenly, in the middle of the night, I awoke hearing voices talk to me. I got up, wrote down what was said, and then afterwards, through letters, verified that what I had heard was actually correct. One day a most awful experience came to me. I was in a Hotel about to retire to rest, when suddenly I heard a voice like the rumbling of thunder, and in a moment every piece of furniture was turned around. The noise was fearful, and the thought came to me—People in the Hotel will be alarmed. What shall I do? I exclaimed, "Jonathan, is it you," and a deep rumbling "Yes" was the answer. I begged him with all my heart to go away. I heard steps coming up the stairs. I locked my door, but it was of no use. The door was opened and the Hotel-keeper came in: "What have you been doing with this furniture?" "Oh," I replied, "when I come to a Hotel I always like to change the furniture in my room. I hope it did not disturb you?" He looked at me and said, "Are your arms so strong?" "Oh, yes," I replied, "well developed muscles." He left me with these words: "I hope you will not move any more furniture, or we shall have to come again." I locked my door quickly, and I whispered to myself, "if it comes again I shall be put into a lunatic asylum." I retired to rest, but did not sleep so afraid was I that Jonathan would return, and early the next morning I paid my bill and went away.

Now this corroborates the idea that your Society has been controlled by living Adepts. Again to prove to you how Occult Societies can be guided by living men: When I was in Germany, I heard of a certain group of men and women, also seven in number (always strange that number seven), who were determined to sit for Spiritualistic manifestations, to develop into mediums; but the very first night they were informed that such was not to be their object; they were to develop their faculties, so that they would be able with knowledge to enter on all planes at will, and then they would be able in Germany to bring forward the Theosophical teachings, because the Germans, who are so proud of their philosophers and of their past records of philosophy, would be unwilling to accept Theosophy from England. Therefore the great Adepts of the White Lodge sent one of their messengers to that group of men and women, who could neither read nor write, with the exception of one boy who acted as scribe, and, by slow degrees, they developed the marvelous powers within them.

On acquainting Madame Blavatsky with these facts, she replied: "I know those people, there is an Adept in Nuremburg who is developing them." She then begged me to go to Kempton, the town where they were living and verify for myself how wonderful were their great gifts and knowledge; also H. P. Blavatsky prophesied "that in time those men will have royal personages as their pupils." This prediction, I have been told, has come true. The men and women who once lived in a factory have to-day a hundred pupils to whom they teach the laws of Occultism, such as we have it in our Theosophical Society, only they give out in Western terms that which has been given to us in Eastern phraseology. Thus is it proved, beyond a doubt, that living Adepts are controlling Occult Societies all over the world; but the great White Lodge of the Adepts in the Himalayas is the grand goal to which all, one day, will reach; and every true Adept looks with reverence and love to those divine Teachers and Helpers of humanity. Therefore, let each one, in whatever Society he may find himself, try to develop the powers that are lying latent within himself, so that as they blossom out into activity, he may work for the service of mankind, not only on this plane but on other and finer planes of being.

COUNTESS WACHTMEISTER.

LIFE AFTER DEATH.

(Concluded.)

The next higher stages contain the ignorant but sincerely religious people who believe in the literal golden streets, the actual sea of glass, and the material tree of life, etc. They pass into exactly the kind of heaven which occupied their thoughts here and are perfectly contented. Only those that are higher can look down and pity their limitations. Here, people of the same religion, people of the same nation, etc., are bound together; and this is how we may figuratively say that there does exist a Christian Heaven, a Buddhist Heaven, the Hindu Heaven, etc. They are able to communicate quite freely among themselves, and any of these through a medium will describe their particular heaven. However the various sects are more liberal after their transition and the lines of creed are more or less blotted out in the contemplation of the general similarity of their thoughts and aspirations.

Another stage is devoted to those who were, in spite of their religious professions, more or less materialistic, and whose time on earth was spent in studying for more knowledge, those interested in science, politics, and the lower phases of philanthropy. These are tied in this higher portion of the astral world and there continue to grow and develop until they are ready for a return. Agnostics are here kept prisoners by their lack of understanding of higher conditions. Materialists, who were moral, honest and whose true home was further on, are here restrained by their fondness for earth methods. As they thought in life that they became unconscious in death, so in the astral they fear to pass into the sleep which would wake into the heavenly regions. It is hard to teach them to trust their intuition and travel the magnificent roads beyond.

But let us pass into the higher. By leading the proper life now you may pass rapidly through the astral world. If you cultivate mind, virtuous inclinations, etc., you subjugate here all that would keep you imprisoned in the astral. You will then pass asleep through the astral world, a sleep filled with pleasant dreams, and wake into the sublime regions beyond. If you so purify the astral body now, it will pass away rapidly after death and you will awaken quickly. That awakening is the consciousness of Devachan (Heaven), the place of the gods, the world to which your mind now belongs, and which it would now enjoy if you would allow it. The first experience is that of bliss, freedom of life, beauty, joy, rapture, music, light, the body of the soul itself luminous and glorious, all touches of pain disappear, all miseries have perished in the bodies of the lower worlds. The use of every faculty is a delight, we find around us all the friends and the things which we enjoyed upon earth. It matters

not if the bodies of those friends are still on the earth, for all souls are in heaven, but all are not conscious of it. Separation is only on the side of those on earth. The souls of those on earth realize this but are not able to communicate it to the physical body. Souls are not separated by space but by difference of conditions. If you live the life of the soul while in the body, death will only come as the physical separation.

Sometimes when you are asleep the soul is in the presence of and meets with its loved ones, and oft times you bring back to your waking consciousness real memories of these visits. If there is a soul with which you would come in touch, one which has passed on beyond, think lovingly of that soul as you go to sleep, but not longing to draw it backwards to earth experiences, and you may come into touch with it on the plane where it is and where you should be.

Follow me higher. Every soul passes on to higher planes as it is prepared for it. A scanty sowing here brings a scanty harvest in the higher planes, but still it is a growth and the soul advances higher and higher, and on its return is prepared to again advance to higher realms.

The soul which loved and knew the higher here on earth is able to make still stronger the ties which have bound it to the ones it loved here, and the perception of its relations to others becomes clearer as the ties become stronger, and rebirth will bring it into closer relations by means of family ties or soul bonds. The more unselfish the affections the closer will the ties be again.

Another step higher. Souls in earth life who come across higher souls whom they regard as teachers, and who follow out the guidance of that higher one, will in Heaven find that same soul still its teacher, and will learn with greater facility and will grow more rapidly than on earth. Cultivate, then, these ties now, and even if you do not meet the soul which you follow as a guide now, you will grasp their thought, and then as you pass beyond you will come closer, until finally the actual presence of the soul of the teacher will greet you and still greater strengthen the ties which have brought you thus far. If you study Plato, Pythagoras, or any other great sage or teacher now earnestly they will come closer to you in Heaven. Every soul with whom you knit yourself by love, by study, you there will learn from. Then start those ties now, for as you sow here you will reap there.

But higher yet. If you would attain to the highest region which the mind can grasp, then worship the divine teacher while still on earth. There are those who should be worshipped as well as revered. The Buddha, the Christ, and others, can, like the sun, enlighten millions of beings on earth and bring life everywhere and give no less to one because others receive a share. As every one can enjoy the life of the sun, so every soul can share the whole life of the great soul, and it be none the poorer for the gift. The divine ones are not limited in their powers of

giving. The highest gleam you have ever had here, the sublimest of divine inspiration, is but a faint idea to aid imagination in conceiving of the realms beyond. Such taste of divine life and divine glory is experienced before return to birth, even though the experience may be only for a moment; but some souls live there for ages. Such is the condition when the lower bodies have been cast away in the realization of the sublimity and perfection of truth. That is the highest limit of life that the soul knows, but beyond it, there is as much more, and all with the golden line of memory of the steps up the glorious heights.

Death is but the birth into a nobler existence; after every life there is a wider range of immortality, that we, who have trod the regions beyond, have learned. All this we know is yours, even if you do not know it, and that divinity will some time come to you. And if one word of a disciple who knows it, and one glimpse of one who has seen it, and a gleam of light, even though the hint be faint, it may be but that my soul may speak to yours with eloquence greater than that of the tongue, then let the soul of the speaker speak to the soul of the hearer and YOU will know it though your being cannot grasp it.

[Stenographic Report by W. C. B.]

T. S. ECHOES.

THE THEOSOPHIC MOVEMENT.

Mrs. Annie Besant, in her answer to a question of the "Forum Department" in last *MERCURY*, told us that the Theosophical Society, i. e. the true Society, founded by H. P. B. and her faithful friend and helper, Col. Olcott, "has never been as strong as it is to-day," and is in a fair way to a status of unprecedented influence.

This is sufficiently corroborated by the number of new Branches which have been organized during the past year in all Sections, but especially in the American Section, as a response to the devoted and untiring efforts of such earnest and honest workers as Mrs. Besant and Countess Wachtmeister. But to this proof may be added that of the patent signs of disintegration which are manifest at this same time in the midst of those Branches who unfortunately seceded in 1895, through an ill-conceived emotion of nationality. The earnest members among the seceders begin to realize and acknowledge that "the Masters are evidently no longer working with them," and many individuals have been quietly coming back to H. P. B.'s Society until, at last—as seen in the last number of *MERCURY*—the honor of being the first to seek reinstatement in a body belongs to the Lynn T. S. But further vents in the same direction, and more surprising yet, may be confidently looked for before the end of this year, and the last three years of the century will be witness to an extraordinary amount of work and effort done through our constantly reinforced Society, with the patient help of Those who sent and helped H. P. B. And now will be the time for all the earnest pupils and followers of H. P. B. to do their duty and—WORK.

REPORTS OF BRANCHES.

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Sept. 23d.—The members of Golden Gate Lodge have selected for their line of study "Theosophy from a Scientific Standpoint," using the SECRET DOCTRINE as a basis on which to work. We commenced with the Introduction, then the Proem, and for the past few weeks have been studying the first Stanza—all of which is very interesting to students, perhaps a little dry to the on-looker. But that is the very thing we wish to obviate, that there should be no onlookers—all students, thinkers! We have now the presence and assistance of Miss M. A. Walsh, formerly of Mission San Jose. All meetings have been well attended, and we have had visitors from other parts of the State. At present we are favored with a visit from Prof. Mackenzie of Spokane, Wash., who is an able and ready expounder of the teachings of Theosophy. At our meeting last evening we had an interesting illustrated lesson in Chemistry from the Theosophical standpoint by Mr. O. H. J. Schlott, further elucidated by Mr. Marques. Lectures have been given during the past month each Sunday evening by the following lecturers: Miss M. A. Walsh, "The Birth of the Soul and Reincarnation;" Mr. W. C. Bailey, "Waves and Spirals;" Mrs. Alice Best, "The Physical Body;" Mr. C. P. Neilson, "The Purpose of Life." We have to note this month the death of Mrs. Ida P. Richardson of Pittsburgh, Pa., a member of this Lodge, who died rather suddenly September 8th; also the sudden passing away of one, who for many years prior to the schism was the President of Golden Gate Lodge, viz: Mr. E. B. RAMBO; his death occurred on the morning of August 16th, and on the following Wednesday evening, at our usual Branch meeting, the following resolutions were adopted:

WHEREAS, In the demise of EDWARD B. RAMBO, for many years President of this Branch, we recognize the loss of a greatly esteemed Brother and devoted Theosophist; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our heartfelt sympathy be extended to the members of the San Francisco Theosophical Society in this their great affliction, although realizing fully that our Brother's work, so nobly begun, will continue and act as an incentive to others to follow in his footsteps;

RESOLVED, That these resolutions be spread upon the minutes of Golden Gate Lodge; and that a copy be forwarded to the members of the San Francisco Theosophical Society.

CHICAGO, ILL.—Notwithstanding that the dull season has been upon us, the Chicago Branch has been very active during the past month. The plan of study adopted a few weeks ago has proven of great benefit as well as of unbounded interest. A printed syllabus of discussions covering the general subject of OCCULT PHYSIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY has been published for use of Branch members. The questions on this general head have been arranged to cover 14 evenings under the following topical divisions: "Man and his Bodies," "Reincarnation," "Karma and Thought," "Life After Death," "Living the Theosophic Life." Students are referred to special text books that cover the questions. This scheme has so far been carried out with great satisfaction to all. It seems very much easier for an ordinary person to learn a lesson that is given out, as it were, than to arrange one for himself. There we work and learn together; discussion sharpens the wits and one thinks deeper than he is

aware because stimulated by friction and help of other thoughts directed in the same channels that his mind is turned toward. If any of MERCURY'S readers would like a copy of this syllabus, he can send to the Secretary at Chicago Headquarters. We now have here lending libraries for the use of newly-formed Branches that are without proper books for study. There are two courses of reading—elementary and advanced—and these libraries may be kept by each Branch three months. For further information regarding these books one may send to Miss Stevens. These traveling libraries have been arranged at Mrs. Besant's suggestion, and are calculated to do much good. And now for the crowning of the month's work. Mrs. Besant has been with us another week—and it has been such a week—fraught with knowledge, help and love. Mrs. Besant gave three public lectures at Steinway Hall on "Sorrow and Evil; their Cause and Cure," "Clairvoyance, Mutual Healing and Allied Thought, their Relation to Science and Theosophy," "Proofs of the Existence of the Soul." These were for the general public, and then we had private classes, long to be remembered, and two Branch meetings. Mrs. Besant also had two drawing-room meetings at Mrs. Havens and Mrs. Howards. The Brahmacharin has been here with us part of the week. He speaks at the Atheneum Rooms, Sunday evening, September 19th, on "Universal Religion; its Basis." He leaves for New York Monday next, and sails with Mrs. Besant Wednesday, the 22d. This has truly been a time of fall seeding, and we must watch faithfully and work without ceasing. The seeds have been planted—to us belongs the weeding and tending. We pray for plenteous harvests and the laborers are few. 'Tis true we have not over-much courage to meet the struggles that face one every step in the path. But when hope burns dim and strength has all but failed, let us try to remember that we are working in fulfillment of the LAW, and * * * * *

"More is the Treasure of the Law than gems;
Sweeter than comb its sweetness; its delights
Delightful past compare."

P. G. K.

LYNN, MASS., Sept. 14th.—The visit of Mrs. Annie Besant to this city was a notable event and will no doubt mark a brighter Theosophical epoch for Lynn. The members of the Society had heartily co-operated in the completion of arrangements to do honor to their illustrious guest. Success crowned their efforts, and when she appeared at Oxford Club Hall on the evening of September 7th, to deliver her lecture, "The Unseen Universe," an audience of nearly 200—the elite of Lynn—were assembled to greet her, and expressed an enthusiastic appreciation of the lucid presentation of the subject, as well as for the gifted orator. Wednesday morning, September 8th, she gave a public reception for inquirers, at the home of the President, Mrs. Helen A. Smith, 176 Washington St., whose guest she was during her stay in this city; as also were the Countess Wachtmeister and Miss Willson, who accompanied her. At 12:30 she held a members' meeting, giving profitable instruction up to the time of her departure for Boston. On Monday evening, September 13th, the Lynn Theosophical Society in its renewed capacity, with a membership of 12, commenced its public study meetings at W. C. T. U. Hall, corner Washington and Oxford Sts., with an audience of about 25. The subject of the evening was "The Theosophical Movement, its Work and its Workers." After the opening exercises, the President spoke on the subject at some length, after which she introduced Miss Willson, who was present, inviting questions on the sub-

ject, which were answered by our sister in a very satisfactory manner; and also by the President, in whatever line the interest of the questioner was directed. There will be meetings held weekly at the same place on Monday evenings by the Branch.

NATHAN A. BEAN, Sec'y.

ROCHESTER, N. Y.—Eleven years ago the 6th day of last January, I was received into Rochester Branch with an initiatory ceremony now long obsolete. It was the last meeting ever held by that Branch. It was thereafter virtually dead for more than a year when its charter was cancelled. None of the former members could afterwards be moved to the least interest in Theosophic questions. The press for years was in the habit of amusing its readers with grotesque distortions of Theosophic doctrines, and sometimes with libels upon its chief officers refusing even to give space for reply. Business men and respectable people generally did well to be wary of showing Theosophy even tacit encouragement. Lecturer after lecturer visited the city only to attract some curious listeners, but failing to establish any organization or to induce a single person to identify himself with the Society. About a month ago it became known to the press that Mrs. Besant and the Countess Wachtmeister would visit the city; editors at once became disposed not only to show our cause respectful attention, but sought material from the manuals for Theosophical articles in their columns, and even requested manuscript matter bearing upon the subject. Both lectures of Mrs. Besant were attended by highly appreciated audiences, though in number they hardly reached 300 each evening. The final lecture on "Brotherhood the Necessary Basis of Society," delivered on the evening of August 27th, seemed to keep every listener spell-bound to its close. On the mornings of the 27th and 28th, Mrs. Besant received callers at the home of Mrs. Thayer-Sanford, her hostess, and answered many questions. None failed to be captivated with her simple style of elucidating the most abstruse points. Two hours passed away each morning in this manner, without any one taking note of time. At the close of the meeting on the morning of the 27th, 14 names were obtained, apparently without effort, on an application for a charter for a Branch to be known as Blavatsky T. S. We bade farewell to the ladies with whom a few hours' conversation made us feel to be tried friends grateful for what they had accomplished in teaching and organization during so short a time.

J. L. G.

BOSTON, Sept. 17th.—Mrs. Besant's visit to this city and to Greenacre resulted in the formation of the Petrovna Branch, with about 50 members and with the promise of as many more before very long. Briefly that is the apparent result of Mrs. Besant's visit to Boston, but in reality her presence in the city meant a good deal more to many persons. She is a host in herself, and she sowed a seed here that will undoubtedly bear fruit in many directions. For there were many persons who attended her lectures and there first saw the talented lady that have since been thinking along the Theosophic lines for the first time in their lives. Mrs. Besant made a wonderful impression on many persons here. Her eloquence fascinated them to a certain extent, but her sincerity and her rare erudition in so many fields of knowledge held them and impressed them even more deeply than the beauties of her voice and diction. It was not a very cheerful prospect that Count Wachtmeister faced when he came here in the latter part of August to announce the coming of Mrs. Besant. It was not the best time of the year for Boston, but when the fact that nearly

all who would be interested in the movement were away is taken into consideration her success is really phenomenal. Steinert Hall was well filled at each of Mrs. Besant's three lectures and her "talks" at Mrs. Courier's rooms and at 23 St. James' Ave., were listened to by 40 and 50 persons each day. The Petrovna Branch has begun active work and study, and it promises well. A. J. P.

SEATTLE, WASH., Sept. 12th.—The last two months have proved to be an eventful season for Ananda Lodge. Many strangers attended the meetings and listened to some excellent papers which have been presented on "Mysticism," "The Spiritualization of Matter," "Theosophy and Vegetarianism" and "The Planes of Consciousness." We have been very happy in having with us our Brother, Prof. John Mackenzie of Spokane, who delivered three public lectures on "The Immortality of the Soul," "The Christian Mission of Theosophy" and "The New Astronomy" and gave to the Lodge a delightful and helpful talk on THE SECRET DOCTRINE. Mr. Mackenzie, with some of the members, visited the Warship Monterey in the Seattle Harbor and gave a talk on Theosophy and distributed some literature; some of the sailors attended the meetings regularly during their stay here. The visit of Mr. Mackenzie has been productive of much good to the Lodge, and we look forward with pleasure to another visit on his return from a propaganda tour along the Sound.

HARRIET C. STEIN, Sec'y.

TORONTO, CANADA, Aug. 28th.—The chief event in Toronto T. S. has been the visit of Mrs. Besant and the Countess Wachtmeister. On Sunday, August 22d, they took part in a public meeting, held by the Branch, at which from 1000 to 1200 persons were present. On Monday, August 23d, Mrs. Besant lectured, subject "Reincarnation, or the Evolution of the Soul," and on Wednesday, August 25th, subject "Theosophy and Recent Science." On both occasions her wonderful gift of oratory and power of intellect held the attention and commanded the respect of audiences which included our best citizens. By those who attended, words of the highest praise are expressed. Six applications for membership have already been received and several more are expected. On Tuesday evening, August 24th, Mrs. Besant lectured in the neighboring city of Hamilton, her subject being "The Unity of Religions," the result being that a number of names sufficient to complete a Branch there were secured. Her visit to Canada has awakened the souls and stimulated the energies of all our members.

F. E. TRUS.

CLEVELAND, OHIO.—The much anticipated visit of Mrs. Besant and the Countess Wachtmeister to Cleveland occurred on August 14th, and covered a period of three lectures which were well attended. Especially was it so on Sunday evening, August 15th, when, although we had a severe electrical storm at the hour of the lecture, there was a large and interested audience. Those present certainly listened to a magnificent "sermon" on that Sunday evening, the subject of which was "Death and After." Mrs. Besant also gave some very valuable talks to the Branch and to several small assemblies. The efforts of Countess Wachtmeister toward increasing our membership resulted very satisfactorily both to her and to us. Where we had but 12 members previous to the visit of the ladies, we now number 32. The regular meetings of our Branch are on the second and fourth Monday evenings of each month at the office of Dr. Q. J. Winsor, 355 Prospect St. HELEN B. OLMSTED, Sec'y.

BUFFALO, NEW YORK, Sept. 1st.—Mrs. Besant has come and gone and Fidelity Lodge has settled down for a good winter's work. On August 17th and 18th, our President was at Lily Dale, N. Y., with Mrs. Besant. On August 18th, Mrs. Besant lectured at the Woman's Union Hall, Buffalo, on "Materialism Undermined by Science," and on the 20th, on "Theosophy and Social Condition," to crowded houses. On Friday afternoon she gave a public reception at the Hotel Iroquois, which was well attended. At the close of her reception the clergymen present extended her a vote of thanks. She left for Toronto on the 21st.

G. B. HASTINGS, Sec'y.

TOLEDO, OHIO.—Our Branch has now 31 members, 12 having been added since August 1st. A "Secret Doctrine" class will commence the first Monday in October. Our winter's Syllabus is just completed and will extend from October to June. Question Box once a month, the other meetings being devoted to original papers prepared by members. Three persons will have charge of the Question Box. Since March 1st we have added 13 new books to our library, this being done by small contributions to our Library Box.

AUSTRALASIAN SECTION, August 6th.—Miss Edger's lectures in Brisbane during the last week in May proved a great success, so much so that the room became too small for the audience and the largest public hall was secured for the last lecture before she proceeded further North. In Gympic, a mining center, two lectures were given, and several people became members, who may shortly be expected to form themselves into a Branch. Arriving at Maryborough, June 12th, two lectures were given to large and appreciative audiences. The press spoke very highly of Miss Edger's eloquence and lucidity. In the meantime news had been received that our President-Founder, Col. Olcott, had arrived at the northernmost port of Queensland, with the intention of visiting the Branches in Australia and New Zealand, and undertaking any propaganda work which could be arranged for. As it would have been somewhat expensive and inconvenient for two lecturers to visit the Branches within a few weeks of each other, Col. Olcott decided to wait for Miss Edger at Rockhampton so that they could rearrange their respective tours, so that they might be done together. Two lectures were given in Rockhampton to fairly good audiences on June 18th and 20th; the Branch was placed on a better basis, and on June 21st, Col. Olcott and Miss Edger left for Maryborough and Bundaberg. On June 25th and 27th, lectures were given at Bundaberg and the Branch was reorganized. In Maryborough two lectures were given on June 28th and 29th. In Brisbane, on July 4th, Miss Edger lectured in the Theatre Royal to between 600 and 700 people. On the 6th she spoke at Loowomba, on the 8th at Newcastle, and on July 11th she spoke to a very crowded meeting in the Theosophical Rooms, Sydney. Col. Olcott remained in Brisbane some time longer, giving three lectures to fairly good audiences. A series of four public lectures were arranged in Sydney, at all of which both the Colonel and Miss Edger spoke. The audiences ranged from 400 to 600; all the papers spoke in eulogistic terms of Miss Edger, and seemed far more inclined to treat Theosophy seriously and favorably than they had ever previously done. On July 20th, the two lecturers left by train for Melbourne, where arrangements on a more ambitious scale than those previously attempted on this tour had been made. On August 7th, they visit Hobart where they will stay a week. Then the Branches of the New Zealand Section will receive their attention, and the Colonel expects to be back in Sydney about October 16th or 18th. H. A. W.

SCANDINAVIAN SECTION, GOTHENBURG, Aug. 24th.—On the 29th of May the Scandinavian Section of T. S. held its annual convention in Stockholm. The convention assembled at the Lodge rooms, 28 Sturegatan at 10 o'clock A. M. The Section had the pleasure of receiving as its guests Mr. G. R. S. Mead, Gen. Sec'y of the European Section. The President Mr. A. Tettersten took the chair and made a short address of welcome to the members present, and especially to Mr. Mead, who expressed his satisfaction at the good work done in Sweden. Then followed a detailed account by Mr. Tettersten of what had occurred during the last year; all papers relating to the separation were collected and read in due order, giving a plain, historical sketch of the proceedings before the split. Number of members before the separation, 455; present membership, 321; books published: "Theosofisk Tidskrift," 9 in number; "The Secret Doctrine" (translated), two parts, 27-29; "Theosophy a Factor in Civilization," by Sven Nilsson; "The Universal Brotherhood," by Sven Nilsson; "In the Outer Court" (translated), by Annie Besant. On Sunday, May 30th, at 11 o'clock A. M., the members of the convention and a number of other people, interested in Theosophy, assembled at a large hall where lectures and discussions took place, and where Mr. Mead delivered in English a very interesting lecture on "Theosophy in the Two First Centuries;" Miss Betzen read a paper on "Ideas Conducive to Civilization," by Sven Nilsson, who was unable to attend the convention. The Chairman, Major G. Kinell, thanked Mr. Mead for his instructive lecture, and the kindness he had shown by accepting the invitation of the Section, and thus enabled the members to make his personal acquaintance, which surely would have a beneficent effect on the future work of the Section. The meeting closed at 1:30 P. M. In the evening a social gathering was arranged at Hushalls' Skolan, 19 Prodgarsgatan; about 30 members including Mr. Mead were present. After supper Mr. Mead made a short address in which he expounded his views on the doctrine of atonement. About the middle of September the various lodges will resume their usual work, which has been suspended during the summer months. M. WESTERLUND.

SYNOPSIS OF A LECTURE ON "WAVES AND SPIRALS."

Such was the subject elucidated in the Native Sons' Building, San Francisco, September 5th, for the Golden Gate Lodge T. S., by Will C. Bailey, with the help of about 40 large, colored diagrams, showing in detail this progressive motion of Nature.

After a quotation from the Stanza V of Dzyan: "The Primordial Seven, the first seven breaths of the Dragon of Wisdom, produce in their turn from their holy circumgyrating breaths the fiery whirlwind." * * * "Fohat traces spiral lines to unite the sixth to the seventh—the crown," the first motion illustrated was one of perpendicular vibration, which was changed into an apparent wave by successive vibrations of successive perpendiculars, as in a regiment of soldiers, if the front ranks kneel, and as the foremost one rises the next ranks in the rear kneel and rise in like manner; to an onlooker it will appear as if a wave swept along the column. This was followed by illustrations from fields of grain caressed into waves by the gentle breeze; the waters of the ocean beaten by the fury of the gale into gigantic waves, coils and spirals; and the permanent records of the undulations of the shifting sands which oft times are cemented into hard rocks, showing the wave motion for ages yet to come.

The change of the simple vibration into the spiral was shown by diagrams of a complicated pendulum experiment, plainly showing also the revolution of the earth on its axis, its revolution around the sun, and the further revolution around the more distant centers of space.

Then came charts devoted to the mode of vibration of sounds and illustrating the spiral progression of the musical scales; the reason for the harmonies and discords of music and other sounds and their effects on other planes were explained by the symmetry or the lack of symmetry of their respective spirals.

The reason for the great gap between the slow spiral vibrations of sound and the extremely rapid vibrations of light, the speaker said, lay in the fact that both these spiral modes of motion were portions of a still greater spiral, and as when looking along a spiral we see only those points which contact our plane, so we realize that between sound and light there are series of vibrations on other planes which are visible only to those functioning on those planes.

This same reasoning applies to the spiral of human life, one loop of which may be taken as an earth life or incarnation, and the following period of obscurity (from our material point of view) to lives on other planes, until the spiral motion brings back reincarnation.

The transition from the spiral to the coil was then presented, together with the combined spiral-coil or vortex, the most potent of all the modes of motion.

From the geometrical and abstract spirals, attention was called to some of the spirals of nature, as the house of the snail and numerous small shell fish, the coiling form of the web of the spider, the spiraled vessels of plant life, the regular spiral arrangement of the branches of trees, and the uniform rotation of the axial planes in crystallization.

Some of the artificial spirals of man were shown in the unsuccessful "Tower of Babel(?)" and the Archimedes screw; this illustration was particularly interesting because giving a perfect instance of apparent falling or retrogression as we seek the lower bend of the spiral, while at the same time we are constantly progressing with each turn.

The great system of coils and spirals of the earth itself was shown in the arrangement of the mountain chains upon the globe.

The closing portion of the lecture was taken up with the spiral, coil and wheel in symbology, as found in the Svastika, the prayer-wheel, the winged-globe, etc.

The lecture, which shows a deep study of the subject, was considered of such importance that Mr. Bailey has been requested to enlarge upon it and make a series of two or three lectures for future use among the various branches, who might feel an interest in the subject.

BOOK REVIEWS.

Spiritualism in the Light of Theosophy.—Our readers will be glad to know that the lecture given by Countess Wachmeister at the Northwestern Spiritualists' Camp Meeting, and published in August and September numbers of this Review is now issued as a 5-cent pamphlet by Mercury Publishing Co., 414 Mason street, S. F. It is just the thing for distribution, especially among our Spiritualistic friends, as it shows how closely Spiritualism and Theosophy are related, the latter explaining the former by giving a philosophy to phenomena and by expanding the narrow horizon of the astral into the limitless vistas of other planes. The nominal price of this pamphlet permits every one to aid, by distributing it far and wide, in bridging over the gap which heretofore has separated these two great movements of the XIX Century.* W.

* A critical review of this pamphlet will appear in the November issue.

THE HUMAN AURA, by A. Marques, published by Mercury Publishing Office, has been adopted as a "text-book" in the extensive and scientifically arranged syllabus of weekly studies taken up by the Branches of Chicago and San Francisco.

Lucifer, now *Theosophical Review*, September.—The first number of this publication, in its new form, contains an unctuous, but we think labored and quite unsuccessful attempt at justification for the change of the old honored title of "Lucifer," beloved to all Theosophists as a memory of H. P. B. The most cogent reason given seems to be that it "had to be done in deference to the wishes of some respected Theosophists." It is a pity that their names are not given, for, most decidedly, if there had been a consultation on the matter, a large majority of "the most respected Theosophists" in all our Sections, would have been found opposed to the change. It would have been just as politic and proper to have also dropped the other characteristic word, for there was quite as much a "question of principle" involved in "Lucifer" as in "Theosophical."

We are sorry, therefore, to have to continue in characterizing the change as an error of judgment. The contents comprise an article on the "Theosophical Movement," excellently written by Mrs. Besant, like everything coming from her pen; a few items of "Watch Tower," a comparison of "The Bhagavad Gita and the Gospels," by Miss Arundale, written as a Christian counterpart to a much more authoritative article from the Hindu standpoint by Kannoo Mai in the THEOSOPHIST; "Fairyland and the Underworld," as compared with modern Theosophic writers; "Among the Gnostics of the First Two Centuries," the end of which seems farther than ever; "The New Dawn," another attempt to excuse the outcasting of poor "Lucifer;" "Future Theosophical Prospects," by Mr. A. P. Sinnett;" "The Law and the Logia in East and West," by B. Keightley; one more disquisition on the Christian Creed," this time by C. W. Leadbeater, and "Theosophical Activities and Reviews." While mentioning these last it is a duty to call the attention of the editors to the flippant, often untheosophical, fault-finding spirit which was unfortunately prevalent in "Lucifer," and seems to be continued in its new incarnation, as witnessed in "Theosophical and Mystical Publications," where nearly every one mentioned is slashed at for some real or fanciful defect. For instance, even our modest and useful Spanish colleague SOPHIA is taken to task for its title in "Uncial Greek," no other more important fault being apparent. The ex-Lucifer aimed at the position of authority on Theosophical lines; we doubt whether it would like the rules of critic to be applied to itself as it did unto others, and we hope that the future "Review" will display in its criticisms a more Theosophical spirit.

M.

Theosophist, August.—"Old Diary Leaves" continue with unabated interest, this installment containing especially an instance of Indian hypnotic power—by the side of which the rudimentary results obtained by the European schools of hypnotism appear like child's play—and a timely illustration that all messages from the White Lodge are always accompanied by a certain password, still in force, and without which the communication is surely spurious, a fact that such of the American Secessionists who honestly base their faith on the Masters, will do well to note. Col. Olcott also tells how he expelled the Vice-President of one Indian Branch for merely attempting to use his position for personal aggrandisement, and how Dr. Frantz Hartman was present on December 17th, 1883, at the annual convention at Adyar, as Delegate from the only three American centers then living, New York, Rochester and St. Louis. Dr. Hartman conveniently forgot the fact when, later on, he found it advantageous for some petty ambition to join the "disloyal" secessionists, but even his occult knowledge cannot obliterate the records. The other articles are a reprint of A. Besant's "Work of the Theosophical Society" published in MERCURY; an interesting address on "Brahmanism and the Future of Brahmins;" a continuation of Mr. Banon's "Modern Prophecies," connecting the European events of 1789, with the revolutions and conjunctions of Saturn; "Christ, an Imitation of Krishna," based on undeniable texts; "The Christian Path;" Mrs. Besant's lecture given in San Francisco on the "Evolution of the Soul;" "Yoga-Instruction" as given in spiritualistic communications, etc., the number finishing with the usual budget of interesting Activities and Reviews, among which we notice that the THIRTY-THIRD Edition, rearranged and enlarged, of Col. Olcott's Buddhist Catechism, the standard work of its kind, has just been issued.

Pacific Theosophist, August, contains "Wings of the Soul," a well-presented study by A. J. Johnson; the continuation of a series on "Life's Little Ironies," J. H. Griffes; a good plea against "Capital Punishment," A. Spinks; a short "Study on Patanjali," by Mrs. S. A. Smith. But the characteristic article is an editorial on "Brotherhood in the Ranks," a kind of sequel to "Personalities" in the July issue; both are a sad acknowledgement of human weaknesses among the secessionists and might be taken as one more sign of the process of disruption and disintegration which is rapidly growing more patent "in the ranks" of the Secessionist Society, and which at present culminates in the resignation of its President and the disappearance of the monthly pamphlet, whose title of "Forum" had been borrowed from the Society loyal to H. P. B. and her faithful colleague Col. Olcott. But we hail with joy those signs of the

dawn of the day when the disappearance of the petty personalities which caused the secession will allow again the reunion, in one earnest body, of all the honest thinkers who work on the same lines of brotherly love and acquisition of wisdom.

Theosophy in Australasia, August.—This number opens with a well-written "Outlook," in which we find a notice of the great success which is attending the tour made through Australia by our venerable President, Col. Olcott, accompanied by Miss Edger, the General Secretary for New Zealand, who is developing extraordinary powers as a public lecturer; she evidently will be one of the stars of the Theosophic Movement, while Col. Olcott made a very friendly impression on the numerous Australasian spiritualists by his most excellent and practical lectures on "Spiritualism." The other contributions are "Vestures of the Soul," a presentation in a new and original form by Brother H. A. W., who, for the future, ought not to modestly hide under initials a personality which all his friends love and appreciate. "Ecstasia or Spiritual Illumination." by W. A. M.; "Questions and Answers and Activities." A. M.

Mind.—Yet another Review on Occult subjects, and apparently a most excellent one also. Mr. J. Emery McLean, former editor of the "Metaphysical Magazine," brings out, through the Alliance Publishing Co. 21 W 31st street, New York, the first number of a Magazine of "liberal and advanced thought," especially dedicated to Reincarnation and Adeptship, Telepathy, Hallucinations and Premonitions, Phantasms and Apparitions, Clairvoyance and Clairaudience, Psychometry and Automatic Writing, Astrology, Palmistry, Phrenology, Hypnotism and Mediumistic Trance, etc. And, judging from the matter of the first number, and the spirit shown by the quotations, etc., MIND will come nearer to Theosophic lines than any of the previous metaphysical publications. Price, \$2 a year.

Intelligence, September.—The pictured hero of this number is the occultist Franz Hartman, formerly a member of the T. S. until blinded away into secession by trivial personal rancour. The articles treat of the "Dogma of Atonement" (H. Frank), in a spirit quite suitable for a Theosophic study; "Two Views of Life" (F. H. Sprague); the conclusion of the study on Wagner; a first installment on "Inductive Astrology (J. Hazelrigg); "The Health of the People" (H. L. Burpee); the third part of "Philosophy of the Divine Man" (Hudor Genone), and a poem "Self Knowledge" (L. T. R. Akin), with an interesting "World of Thought."

Lotus Bleu, Paris, August, continues the publication of the French translation of the SECRET DOCTRINE, and also the first part of an interesting study by B. Keightley on the obscure question of "Reincarnation in the Animals;" the other articles are "Man is What He Thinks," P. Gillard; "The Path," C. Z. Leiningen; "Plethora," or indigestion through excess of eating, by Dr. R. C. Fisher; an installment of the "Glossary," the "Forum Department"—containing a somewhat erroneous answer about the now stale subject of the end of the Cycle—and "Echoes and Reviews."


The Exodus, Gesterfield Publishing Co., New York.—The September number closes the second year of this very helpful periodical. "The Breath of Life" (When in Need of Patience) is the gem of this number. It forms one of a series of treatments for daily practice in the struggle for life. We notice the following mantrams: "I have patience with all limitation, for by it I prove the unlimited," "I am, and nothing can make me cease to be," "I am housed in God all the while I look upon the mortal." W.

Notes and Queries.—We had missed this welcome visitor, and now find that the August and September numbers have been issued together, containing the usual delightful olla-podrida of curious information, together with an article on "Old Derryfield and Young Manchester," and one on the "Riddles of Man's Life," as also a curious prophetic vision of Washington.

THE FORUM DEPARTMENT.

Any person can send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and short notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Be careful to write only on one side of the paper.

QUESTIONS TO BE DEALT WITH IN THE NEXT AND SUBSEQUENT ISSUES OF THE FORUM.

 Answers should be sent in as soon as possible.

1. *In answer to question CCCLXX, in the September number of VAHAN, Mr. Leadbeater gives the date of the sinking of Poseidonis at 9564 B. C. We would like to ask this writer how he obtains that date, whether through direct occult records, or by clairvoyance, or by calculations on the Precession of the Equinoxes or of the Poles? And in the event of this third supposition being the correct one, would he please tell how he computes the Precession, which is variously estimated between 24000 and 31000 years (by H. P. B., 25868, Herschell's valuation, now admitted incorrect), and moreover the rapidity of which greatly varies at different epochs? [VAHAN please copy.]*

2. *Is it possible to interfere with Karma?*

3. *In many Theosophical writings I find statements somewhat as follows: With the physical and moral decline of races come atmospheric disturbances and terrestrial cataclysms, while (without being able to satisfactorily say why) I believe this to be the case, I should like an occult explanation showing how this is brought about.*

4. *According to Theosophical writings the Ego merely overshadows the child until seven years of age. What different relation does the Ego bear to the child than that born to the adult, and what effect does this different relationship have on the personality?*

5. *The seeming inequalities of human life are, according to the exponents of Karma, the results of previous lives; pleasure and pain in one incarnation being merely effects of causes generated in another. Animals, we are told, do not make Karma, yet we see them existing under similar diversified conditions, some starved and beaten, others pampered and admired.*

In the case of human beings we submit to an inevitable law which bears the stamp of reason and justice, but how can we recognize the sufferings of animals with the idea of a presiding intelligence whose chief attributes are mercy and justice?